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MATTHEWS' AREA

PLANNING AND ZONING

OCT 2 8 1979

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Matthews Area Planning and Zoning
Matthews (Mecklenburg County), North Carolina

AUTHOR: Centralina Council of Governments
P.O. Box 4008
Charlotte, N.C. 28204

SUBJECT: A Plan and suggested zoning for one mile peripheral area around the Town of Matthews.

DATE: March 30, 1979

PLANNING AGENCY: Centralina Council of Governments

SOURCE OF COPIES: Town Clerk,
Town of Matthews
P.O. Box 398
Matthews, N.C. 28105

Centralina Council of Governments

South Mooresville Field Office,
N.C. Dept. of Natural Resources and Community Development
P.O. Box 950
Mooresville, N.C. 28115

ABSTRACT: This Study examines past, present and future problems and opportunities for development of this limited southern sector of Mecklenburg County, for those lands in close proximity and relationship to the Town of Matthews as the Town Limits existed in March, 1979. State, regional, county and municipal plans, policies and actions are examined. Product is a proposed Land Use and Transportation Plan and a zoning map proposal.

Town of Matthews
Box 398
Matthews, N.C. 28105

MATTHEWS AREA PLANNING AND ZONING

March 30, 1979

Preparation of this Report was financed in part through a comprehensive planning grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

THE MATTHEWS SECTOR OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY

The Land Use Plan for Matthews, adopted on April 10, 1978, started:

> "The Town of Matthews was incorporated in 1879, just 100 years ago. That action was in recognition of a distinct community structure or urban character and of an independence as a separate and distinct community.
>
> Prior to that time, the events leading up to the creation of a municipal government were the slow growth of a major crossroads into a community. The crossroads was known as Fullwood, and stage coaches stopped here - one from Charlotte to Monroe, and the other in an east to west direction. These stage coach routes were essentially the alignment today of the Monroe Road leading from downtown Charlotte to Monroe, and N.C. Route 51, connecting at the Albemarle Road (N.C. Route 24 - 27), then to U.S. 74, through Matthews to I-77.
>
> By 1970, signs of acceleration of growth were seen in the increase of residents. Since then, growth has been explosive.

Matthews is located in the south-center of Mecklenburg County, in close proximity to Union County and its rapidly urbanizing sector. Mecklenburg, the most urbanized and populated County in North Carolina, has grown from 55,000 persons at the turn of the Century, then representing three percent of the State's population, to 354,000 in 1970, representing six percent of the State's population.

Located in the heart of the industrial Piedmont of the Southeastern United States, Mecklenburg County has maintained an economic dominance in many areas, and its growth has and continues to be explosive. This growth has been of suburban character, with the inner sections of Charlotte losing population.

During the period 1970 through 1975, as shown in the Regional Land Use Plan of the Centralina Council of Governments, 92% of all new residential development in the County occured in this section to the south of Charlotte. One of the major industrial areas in the County is immediately abutting Matthews, bringing further impacts.

This statement continued:

> "Further, Route 51 has achieved heavy traffic volumes within the Town, most of it "foreign" traffic cutting from U.S. 74 westerly to I-77, Carowinds amusement park, or Douglas Municipal Airport. This traffic has become burdensome and interferes with the entire human-activity patterns of the Town.
>
> Growth of this general mutli-county region since 1950 has indeed been the "urban octupus" funneling onto Matthews originally from the direction of Charlotte but now from all directions.
>
> Mecklenburg's planning for the past twenty years had visualized a policy of containment of urban growth by such proposed devices as the "Outer Belt" beyond which these plans would have permitted only uses compatible within a "green belt", such as farms. That premise no longer applies as urban development has now extended into a series of counties around Mecklenburg including Union County. That part of Mecklenburg County in this sector that had been proposed as such a Green Belt is rapidly urbanizing and has had the fastest growth rate in the County for the past decade."

Among major goals established in this Land Use Plan are:

- Through traffic has become detrimental to the Town. Through traffic will most definitely disturb the special character of Matthews. This through traffic is to be discouraged.

- Extraterritorial authority should be vigorously sought for the Town's own protection.

- The Town should develop a balanced approach with Charlotte, the County, the Centralina Council of Governments, the State, and Federal agencies to assure needs are met, and in an orderly fashion.

- The Town should seek formal voice in the many bodies within the County that exercise so much authority in the development decision-making process, including the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department, the Transportation Planning Process' Technical Coordinating Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.

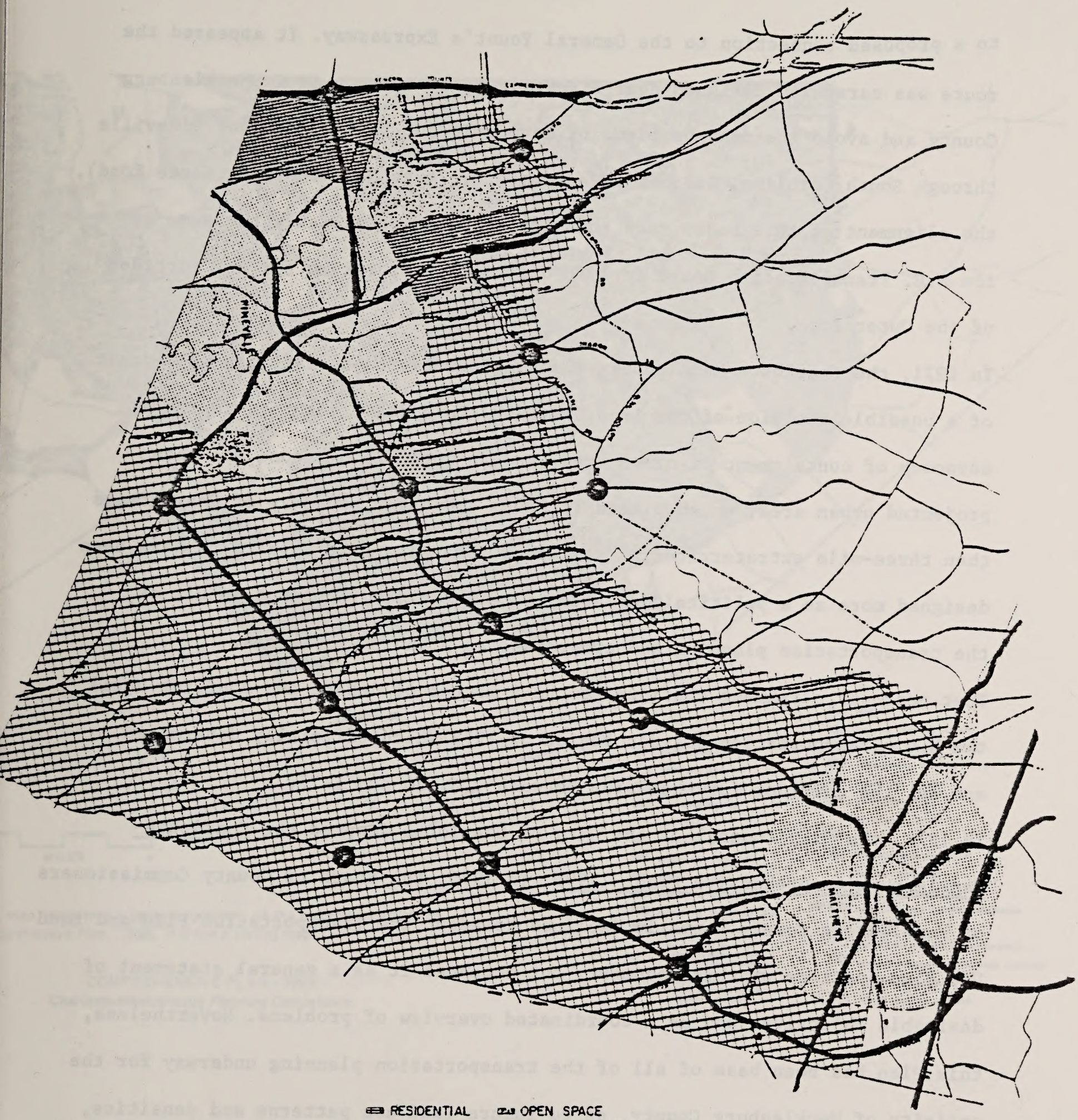
Accordingly, the Town of Matthews applied for and received a Federal "701" Comprehensive Planning Assistance Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, through the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, to prepare a sketch plan for that area around the Town, and proposed zoning of such surrounding area, anticipating in a few years the return of extraterritorial authority.

PAST DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE PROPOSALS VS. ACTUAL DEVELOPMENT

In 1953, a group of concerned Mecklenburg County citizens contracted with the Department of City and Regional Planning, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, with result that publication known as How Shall We Grow?, by the graduate planning class. Among other things, that study recommended a unity in planning for development, for the entire County. One of the results was the creation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission; however, the only of the County's seven municipalities so far included as members of that Commission has been Charlotte, As stated in Matthews' Land Use Plan, these other municipalities literally appear as blank spots on the map of the Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan for 1995.

In 1960, Wilber Smith and Associates, Transportation Planning consultants, prepared a proposed Major Thoroughfare Plan for Charlotte-Mecklenburg. This proposal further recommended containment of urban growth, with an Outer Loop. That Plan essentially remains the base of the current Transportation Planning activities in Mecklenburg County.

In 1968, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission issued a General Development Plan for "South Mecklenburg". South Mecklenburg was defined as an area starting three miles beyond Charlotte's municipal boundary, for the area between U.S. 74 and what was then known as "General Yount's Expressway", better known today as I-77. That Plan, shown on facing page, advocated urban development of the entire southern portion of Mecklenburg County. It further advocated a major street alignment showing a connector route from N.C. 51 east of U.S. 74, traversing near the Union County line, then through Pineville,



GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SOUTH MECKLENBURG

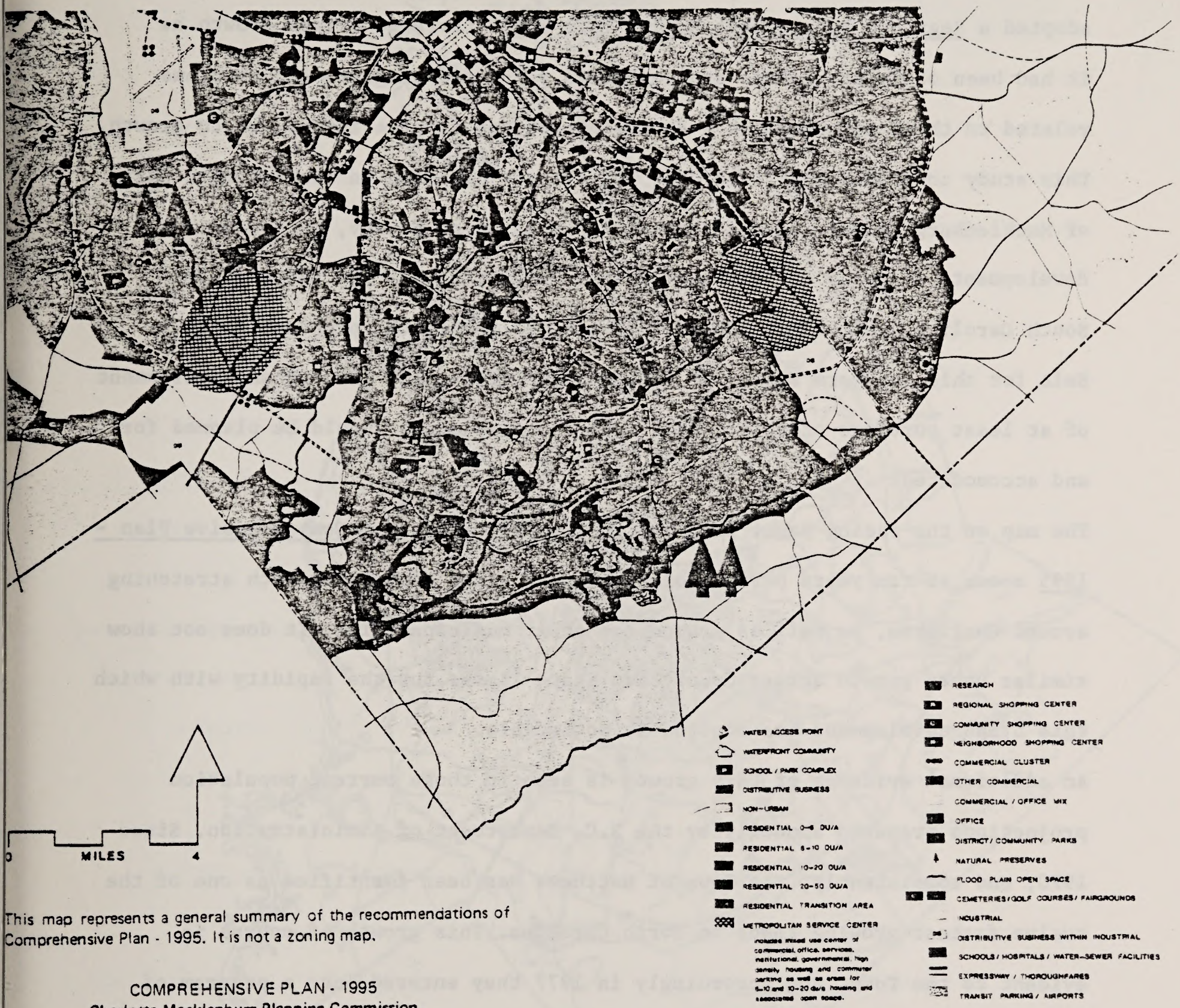
SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

to a proposed connection to the General Yount's Expressway. It appeared the route was carefully designed near Pineville so as to keep it in Mecklenburg County and avoid the many problems of having it cut to the south of Pineville through South Carolina. In that area from U.S. 74 to N.C. 16 (Providence Road), the alignment of this major road then advocated is essentially the same as the N.C. Transportation Board in 1978 officially determined for the corridor of the Outer Loop.

In 1971, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission's staff issued a draft of a possible revision of the Land Use Plan. This draft returned to the advocacy of containment of urban areas and an Outer Loop around the then projected urban area, which placed it along the outer boundary of Charlotte's then three-mile extraterritorial perimeter. The alignment appears to have been designed more as a political declaration of authority than as a result of the transportation planning and comprehensive planning processes.

That near-end alignment continued to be a matter of debate and conflict until the N.C. Transportation Board's action of 1978 which officially determined and set the corridor for that area between U.S. 74 and I-77.

In 1975, the City Council of the City of Charlotte adopted the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995. In 1976, the Board of County Commissioners of Mecklenburg County formally declined to adopt the Transportation Plan and Land Use Plan portions of this document, but accepted it as a general statement of desirable objectives and as a coordinated overview of problems. Nevertheless, this Plan has been base of all of the transportation planning underway for the entirity of Mecklenburg County, as to future land use patterns and densities, transportation needs, networks and alignments,etc. And, again, this Plan does not even reflect the six other municipalities in the County, simply showing them as blank spots on the map. See excerpt from this Plan on the facing page.



This map represents a general summary of the recommendations of Comprehensive Plan - 1995. It is not a zoning map.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 1995
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

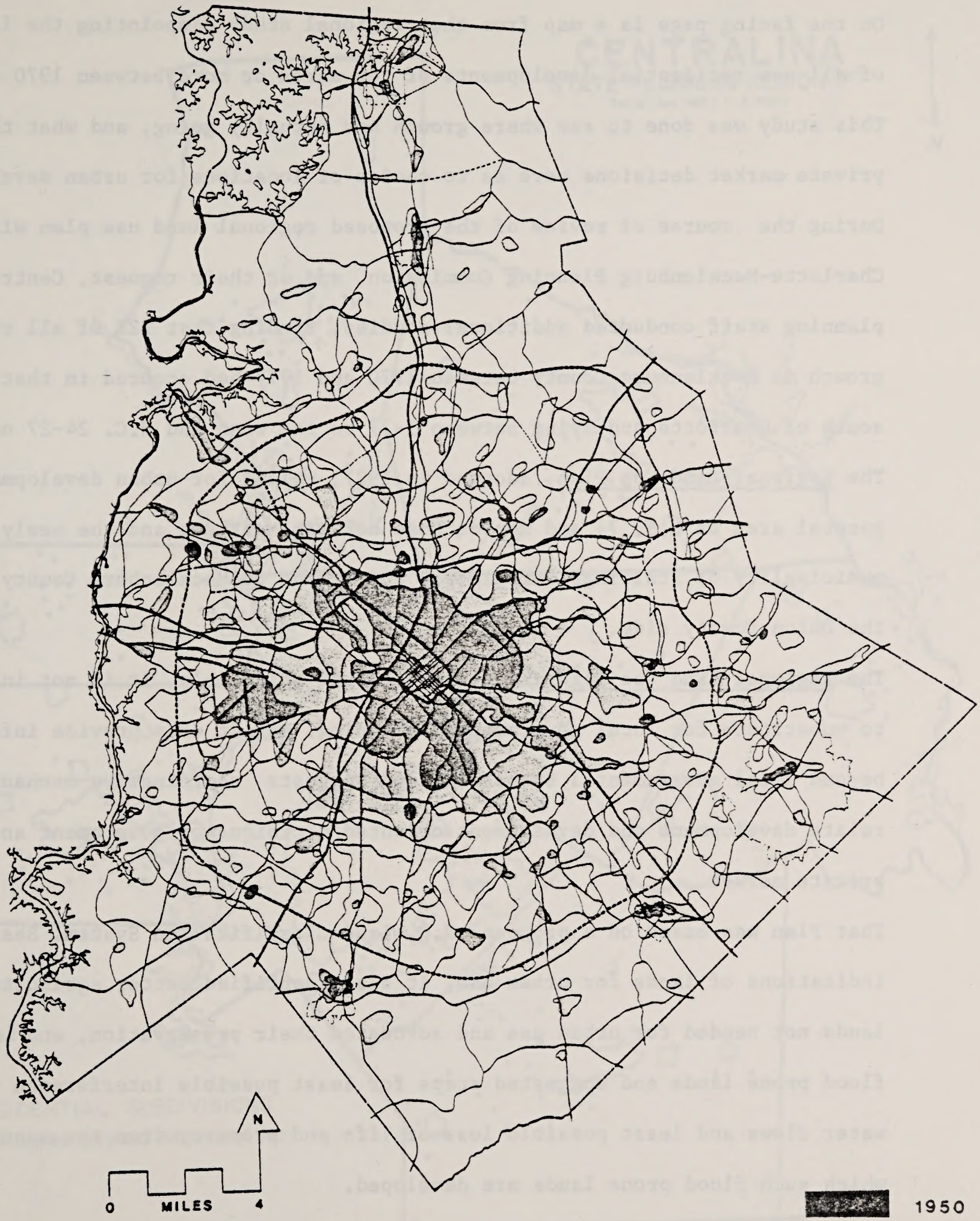
In 1976, the Board of Delegates of the Centralina Council of Governments adopted a Regional Development Guide. This Guide reviewed actual growth as it had been occuring, looked at then local plans and programs and problems related to them, and examined a series of options for the future, as to growth. This study concluded what with what had already happened in the southern part of Mecklenburg County, in the northern part of Union County, with some developments actually half in each County, and with what had happened in South Carolina, that there appeared little realism to the proposed Green Belt for this southern sector of Mecklenburg County, and that urban development of at least portions of this sector were inevitable and should be planned for and accomodated.

The map on the facing page, from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 shows at ten years periods of additional rings of urban growth stretching around Charlotte, as well as around the other municipalities. It does not show similar urban growth across County and State lines. But the rapidity with which this urban development has occured is noticeable.

An additional evidence of this growth is seen in those current population projections prepared annually by the N.C. Department of Administration. Since 1970, and consistently, the Town of Matthews has been identified as one of the twelve fastest growing towns in North Carolina. This growth of course is evident to the Town, and accordingly in 1977 they entered into a program of planning for accomodating this growth while also protecting their unique character.

In early 1977, the Centralina Council of Governments began a series of local meetings with planning commissions, town councils, and county commissions, well as public workshops, to present the background studies towards a more definitive Regional Land Use Plan.

STAGES OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT 1950-1970



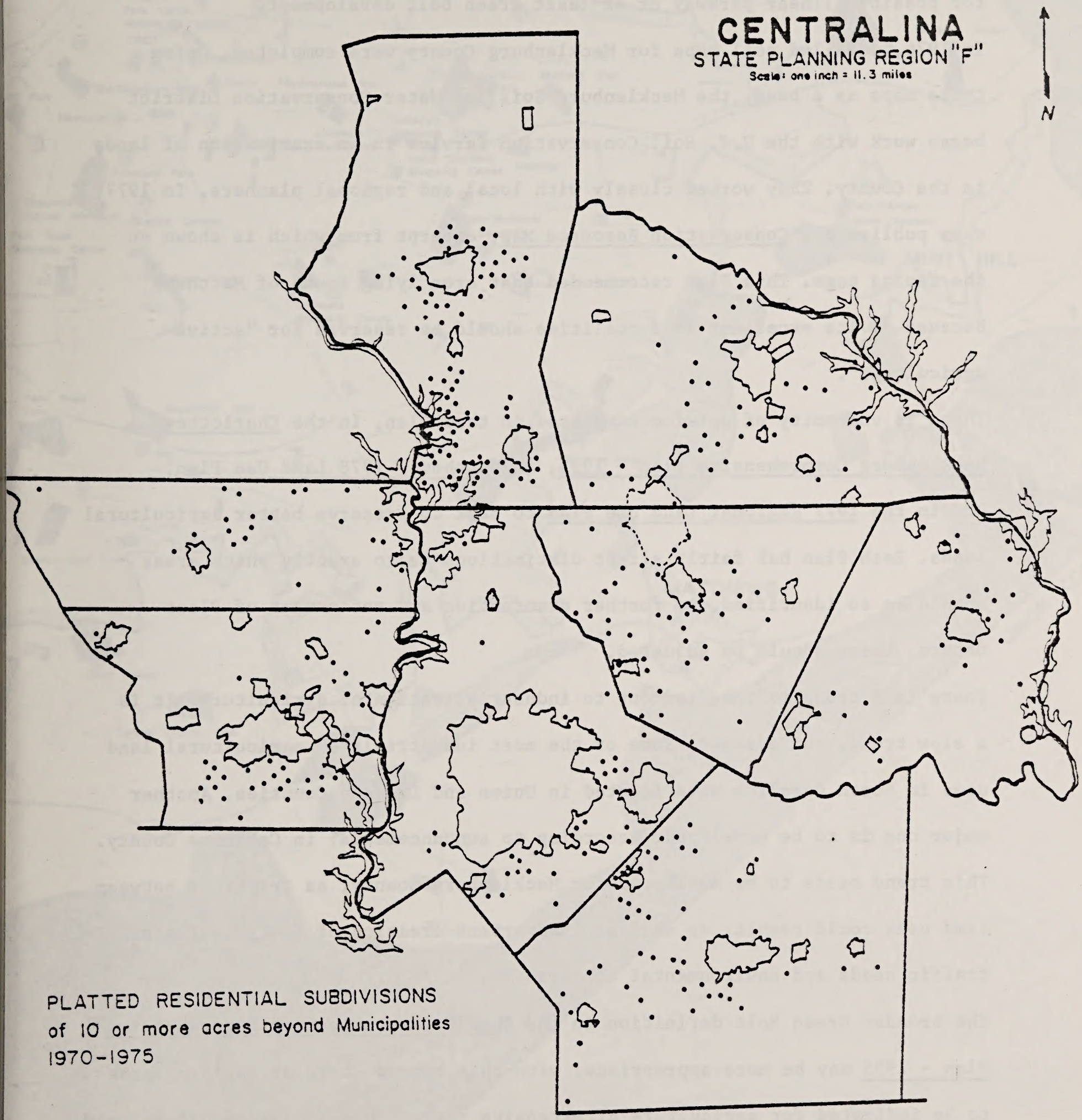
SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

On the facing page is a map from that regional study pinpointing the location of all new residential developments of ten acres or more between 1970 and 1975. This study was done to see where growth was actually going, and what the private market decisions were as to choice of locations for urban development. During the course of review of the proposed regional land use plan with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission, and at their request, Centralina's planning staff conducted additional studies, finding that 92% of all residential growth in Mecklenburg County between 1970 and 1977 had occured in that section south of Charlotte and lying between I-77 on the west and N.C. 24-27 on the east. The Regional Land Use Plan, adopted in 1977, called for urban development in the general area of U.S. 74 and Monroe Road between Matthews and the newly created municipality of Stallings immediately contiguous to Mecklenburg County but on the Union County side.

The Regional Land Use Plan is an overview and guide only. It is not intended to substitute for local governmental planning. But it does provide information beyond local governmental boundaries and suggests coordinative mechanisms to relate development and development-oriented decisions of government and of the private market.

That Plan was based on a proposed N.C. Land Classification System. Besides indications of lands for urban use, it also identified better agricultural lands not needed for urban use and advocated their preservation, and identified flood prone lands and suggested steps for least possible interference with water flows and least possible loss of life and property from the manner in which such flood prone lands are developed.

It specifically suggested those lands in southern Mecklenburg County not needed for urban development that had better soils be preserved for agricultural use. It also suggested lands along Four Mile Creek, to the immediate southwest of Matthews, that are subject to flooding, be carefully developed, and be considered



PLATTED RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS
of 10 or more acres beyond Municipalities
1970-1975

for possible linear parkway or at least green belt development.

In 1976, detailed soil maps for Mecklenburg County were completed. Using these maps as a base, the Mecklenburg Soil and Water Conservation District began work with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service in an examination of lands in the County. They worked closely with local and regional planners. In 1977, they published a Conservation Resource Map, excerpt from which is shown on the facing page. This Plan recommended that area lying south of Matthews because of its excellent soil qualities should be reserved for "active agriculture".

There is unanamity of opinion expressed in that Plan, in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995, in Matthews' 1978 Land Use Plan, and in the 1977 Regional Land Use Plan to seek to preserve better agricultural lands. Each Plan has fairly slight distinctions as to exactly which areas should be so identified. As further examination and refinement of Plans occurs, these should be adjusted.

There is a trend in the Piedmont to industrialization of agriculture. It is a slow trend, but evident. Some of the most industrialized agricultural land uses in North Carolina have located in Union and Lincoln Counties. Another major one is to be developed, according to announcements, in Cabarrus County. This trend needs to be monitored for Mecklenburg County, as frictions between land uses could result, as well as inadvertent creation of new significant traffic needs and environmental concerns.

The broader Green Belt definition in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 may be more appropriate, with this narrow strip of outlying area to be indicated for agriculture of extensive rather than intensive nature, and for such uses as golf courses, stables and pastures, and "country estate" residency.

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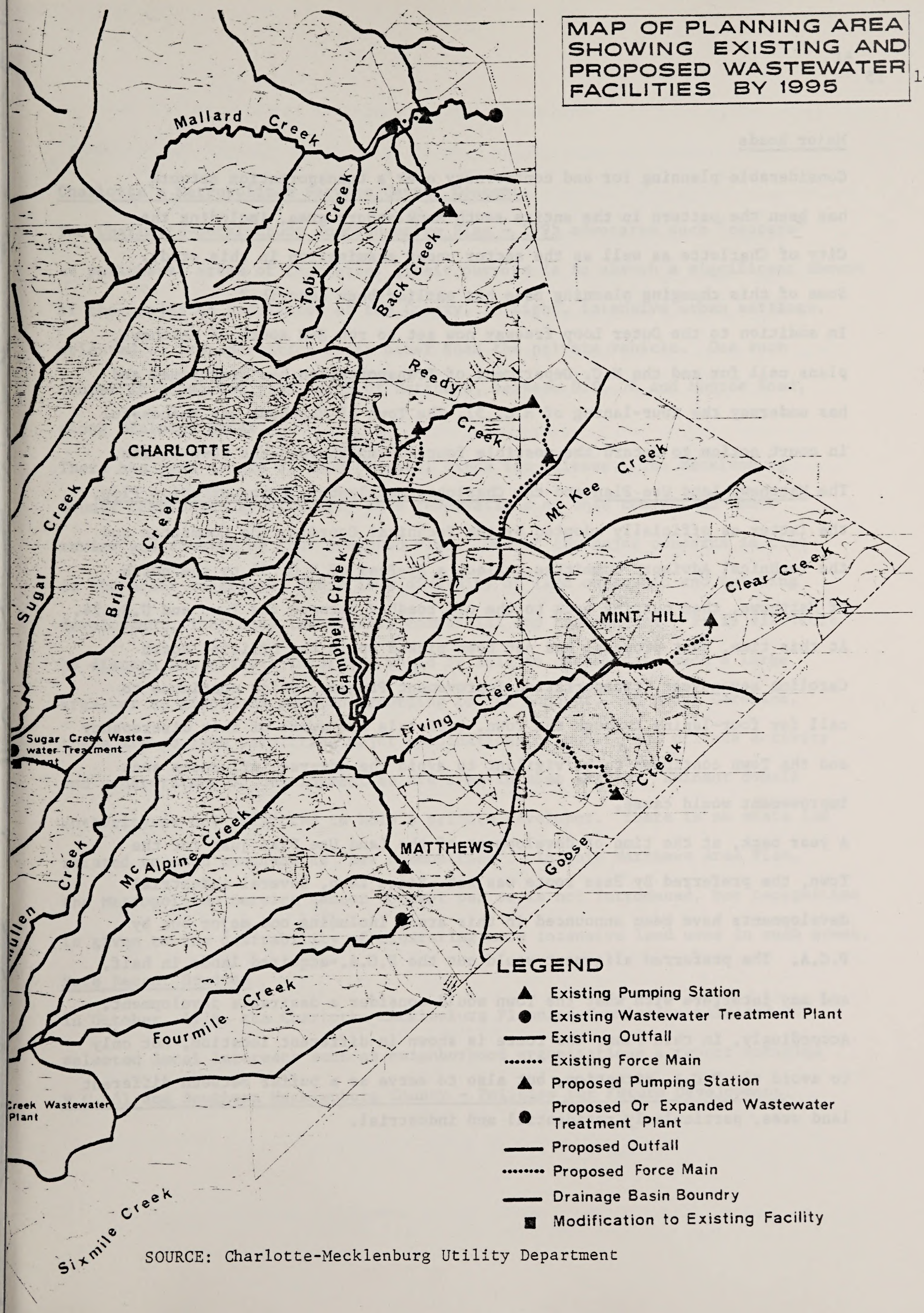
MECKLENBURG SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT RESOURCE MAP 1977

In 1972, Countywide bond referendum proposals for a major wastewater treatment system for Mecklenburg passed. The County and Charlotte entered agreement and created a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department, that has guided planning of and development of this system. Matthews and vicinity is in that area identified in the wastewater treatment plans as "Metro". This planning is such that were the entire southern area of Mecklenburg County between U.S. 74 and I-77 to become urbanized, it could be accomodated. Major outfall lines are proposed generally in alignment with major waterways, in the vicinity of McAlpine Creek and Four Mile Creek.

The system is further designed to accomodate the Town of Matthews needs. The Town Commissioners currently have under consideration a contract offer made by the Director of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department for absorption of the Town's wastewater treatment system into this larger system, both for provision of the base system as well as for its future operation. The Town has also employed a private engineer who has designed needs were the Town to decide to stay with its own system.

In either event, as far as this major public service is concerned, for the general Matthews area it can be assumed that urban needs will be met. Were Matthews to grow in the general easterly direction of the Town of Mint Hill, a different siuation would be present, as for that general area of the County no plans propose public service support systems for urban character. Also, soil types in general discourage private disposal systems such as septic tanks. The State has recently released drafts of certain elements of the "208" Water Quality Management Plan, including one volume entitled Water Quality Management Plan for Septic Tanks, January, 1979. If current actions of the State and Federal governments continue, it can be anticipated that higher standards over individual wastewater treatment systems such as septic tanks will result, as well as stricter enforcement of standards. Mint Hill area growth would diminish.

MAP OF PLANNING AREA SHOWING EXISTING AND PROPOSED WASTEWATER FACILITIES BY 1995



SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department

Major Roads

Considerable planning for and controversy over a transportation network has been the pattern in the entire south Mecklenburg area, including the City of Charlotte as well as the sector under examination in this study. Some of this changing planning base has earlier been described.

In addition to the Outer Loop freeway now set to run E-W south of Matthews, plans call for and the N.C. Department of Transportation has programmed and has underway the four-laning of N.C. 51. The Town of Matthews was successful in court action to retard the possible four-laning through the town limits. The Matthews Land Use Plan and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Transportation Plan, the latter as officially adopted by the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee,reflect a By-Pass of N.C. 51 to the north of Matthews, then cutting back to the old roadbed between the Town and U.S. 74. At this time, that proposal has not been picked up in the official North Carolina seven-year Transportation Improvement Program, which continues to call for four-laning through the Town. Officials are aware of this discrepancy and the Town continues to be vigilant to avoid the adverse influences such improvement would cause.

A year back, at the time of development of the Land Use Plan just for the Town, the preferred By Pass route was set. Since then, several industrial developments have been announced in this area, including one major one by P.C.A. The preferred alignment would cut the P.C.A.-acquired lands in half, and may interfere with what the Town would consider a desirable development. Accordingly, in this Plan, the route is shown in different location, not only to avoid the P.C.A. situation, but also to serve as a buffer between different land uses, particularly residential and industrial.

Charlotte's Metropolitan Service Center Concept

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 advocates such "centers" at peripheral areas of Charlotte. Their purpose is to absorb a significant amount of the projected population of the County, in tight, intensive urban settings, oriented to transportation modes other than the private vehicle. One such Center is suggested just north of Matthews, between U.S. 74 and Monroe Road, along McAlpine Creek.

There has been debate of this proposal since its release. The Mecklenburg County Commission specifically made reservations on this concept in their review and comment on that proposed Plan. One of the major concerns is that in the areas suggested, there is a diversity of land ownership and existing development, including industrial, commercial and residential. It is difficult to discern how private interests would be able to consolidate such a large area, or to afford to develop according to the concept. In North Carolina, there are no laws permitting major combinations of public and private activity and underwriting of development as are seen in some states. Eminent domain authority is not permitted to help a private developer. There is no state law related to such concepts as "new communities". In this Matthews Area Plan, the Metropolitan Service Center concept per se is not introduced, but recognition is given to the desirability of clustering more intensive land uses in such areas.

More Recent Studies

In October, 1978, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission released to selected local interests such as neighborhood organizations a report entitled N.C. 51 and Southern Mecklenburg County - Policies for Future Development.

This study recommended the Mecklenburg County Commission adopt as policy that:

"1. The character and function of N.C. 51 as it passes through the southern portion of the County should remain as a rural arterial road, and that changes in land use along its length which would place that character and function in jeopardy, shall, to the greatest extent possible be disallowed.

2. The rezoning of land in the N.C. 51 study area shall not increase the existing oversupply of residential development potential and that methods be investigated to reduce that oversupply.

3. The extension of sewer service in the Four Mile Creek basin beyond Providence Road be restricted to avoid the untimely dispersal of new development over a larger portion of the area.

4. Land along N.C. 51, or along its intersecting cross streets, shall not be considered for rezoning to non-residential area unless it is part of an overall plan for the development of a larger area and is designed to serve primarily the area to be developed, and the entire plan for development be approved on a conditional basis.

5. Future development along N.C. 51 and in the N.C. 51 study area be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan 1995 including the Land Use and Transportation elements thereof, and more specifically, in accordance with adopted street classification and suburban development guideline programs, and

6. The County seek an increased level of cooperation between itself and those other jurisdictions which have, or may have, an impact on the development of N.C. 51 and Southern Mecklenburg County."

This Study further advocated adoption of a Policy, and four alternative Policies were listed, to assure that development along N.C. 51 has least possible conflict by provision of lots that would back up to the highway, and have no access to it, or similar subdivision control mechanisms.

In March, 1979, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission presented this Study to the County Commission with a recommendation for its adoption. The County Commission in turn deferred any action, and directed their Planning Commission to submit it directly to Matthews, Mint Hill and Pineville, the municipalities that would be directly affected, so that those municipalities would have ample time and opportunity to comment to the County Commission, prior to any action on the part of the County Commission.

NOTE: On June 4, 1979, the Mecklenburg County Commission adopted N.C. 51 Area Policies that had been rewritten since this October, 1978, version. See Appendix.

There are major implications to Matthews and its area from the policy recommendations in this N.C. 51 Study. The assumption that lands along N.C. 51 are or can be made to be of "rural" character, as suggested Policy No. 1 proposes, is false. There are major developments containing large numbers of homes already existent in this area they suggest be "rural".

Further, the Study seems to ignore the offically adopted route for the Outer Belt, and suggests in Policy No. 3 that the Four Mile Creek basin be restricted from sewer service. The northerly half of that basin above the corridor of the Outer Loop and related to N.C. 51 is rapidly being urbanized at this time and will continue to do so. The C.M.U.D. plans call for provision of sewer service to this creek basin, and the work currently underway in the wastewater treatment system for this entire portion of the County is designed on a basis to accomodate and provide for such urban growth.

Proposed Policy No. 5 would do what the County Commission and the N.C. Transportation Board have carefully declined to do in the past, and would alter the action that was taken of setting the corridor for the Outer Loop. It suggests development be by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 including the Land Use and Transportation elements thereof. Among other things, that transportation plan calls for the Outer Loop in a close relationship to Charlotte to the north of N.C. 51 rather than to the south as has been officially set.

Also in 1978, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission issued a draft of a Preliminary Land Classification Plan. This was in response to the then on-going State activity towards a possible mandated requirement that such Land Classifications Plans be prepared by counties. The Regional Land Use Plan of 1977 was based upon this state-proposed Land Classification System.

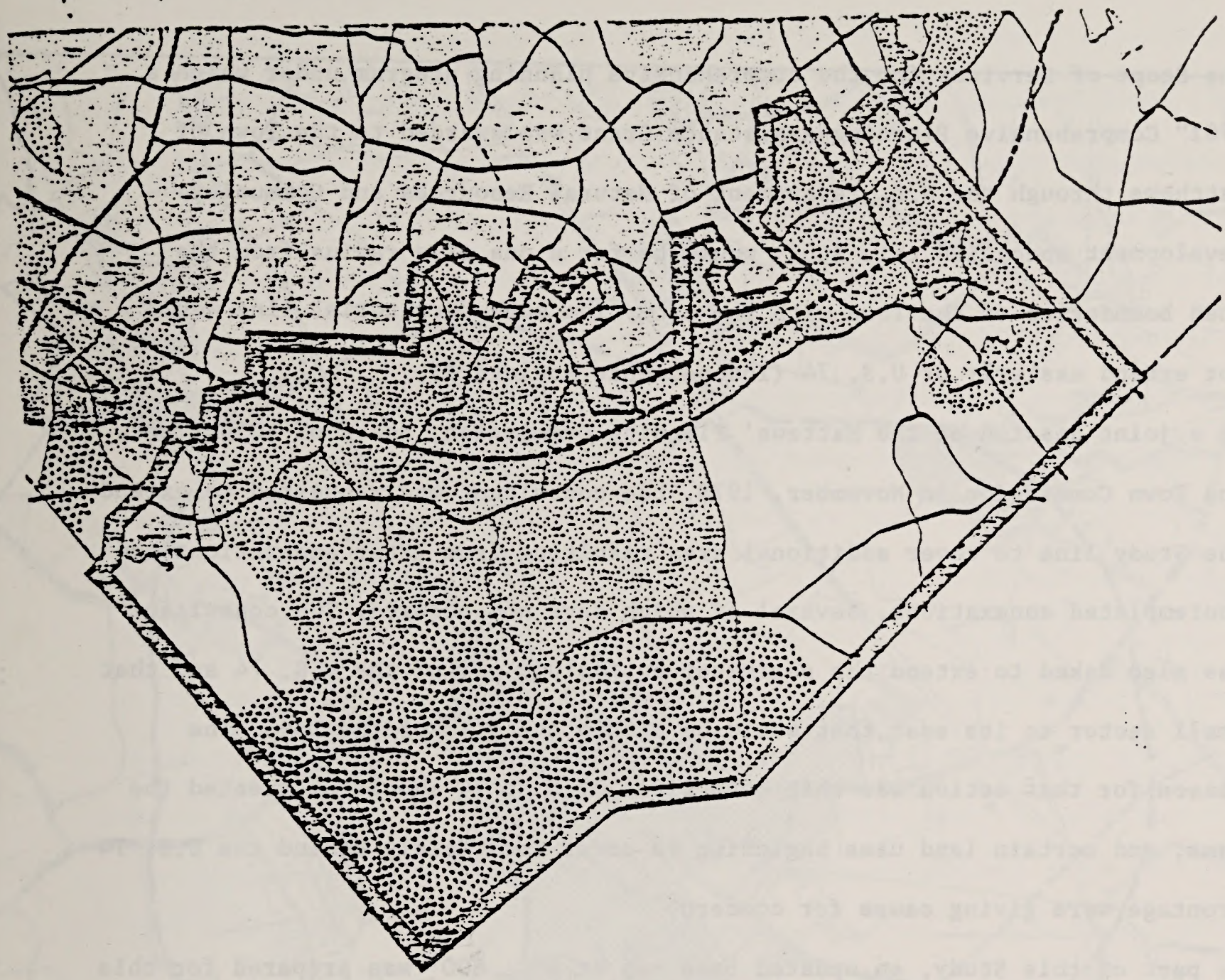
The intent of this proposed System had been to identify urban areas, areas to be urban, and concentrate on provision of urban-type public services such as water and sewer systems only in those areas. The System was also intended to provide means of preserving better agricultural lands from other development, and of protecting unique and sensitive environmental lands such as swamps or mountains.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission's Preliminary Land Classification Plan draft showed almost all lands south and west of Matthews to be "rural". The draft stated: "The purpose of the rural classification is to provide for agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction, and other low intensity uses on large sites where urban services are not required and where natural resources will not be impaired. Rural lands are also to provide for limited residential development and related non-residential land uses." The draft further stated: "Rural lands include two types: land with long range future of low intensity uses and land to become urban in the future beyond a ten year time frame of this Land Classification Plan."

The map on the facing page is from that Study. It suggests "rural" from the Town Limits of Matthews to the west on all lands to the south of N.C. 51. It does not reflect the fact that there are a series of developed subdivisions already in this area, all of urban character. To the south of Matthews towards Union County, it also suggests "rural". Consideration needs to be given to the fact that there are fully developed mobile home courts and subdivisions and significant commercial land uses in that area.

This draft suggests need for reevaluation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995. It presents population projections significantly below those used in the earlier studies and plans, more in keeping with projections that have been made by the state and federal governments. It states a recognition of the trend to urban development of the southern sector, but also says the draft was designed on a policy to seek to redirect growth to the northern portion of the County, which has been a long standing desire.

SOUTH MECKLENBURG (5)



PRELIMINARY LAND CLASSIFICATION

LEGEND

- DEVELOPED
- TRANSITION
- RURAL
- C — COMMUNITY
- AGRICULTURE, FOREST
- CONSERVATION

NORTH

SOUTH MECKLENBURG	ACREAGE	PROJECTED POPULATION 1980	1985	1990
Developed	600	3,900	4,200	4,500
Transition	19,200	13,500	30,200-38,200	48,000-58,000
Rural	10,600	5,200	5,900	7,000
Agriculture	11,200	0	0	0
Total	41,600	22,600	40,300-48,300	59,500-69,500

SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

The Scope of Services for the comprehensive planning program under which a "701" Comprehensive Planning Assistance Grant was awarded to the Town of Matthews through the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development specified this Study would be for a one mile radius from the then boundaries of the Town with the exception such territorial line would not extend easterly of U.S. 74 (Independence Boulevard).

In a joint session of the Mattews' Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, and Town Commission in November, 1978, the consultant was requested to extend the Study line to cover additional area resulting from later annexations and contemplated annexations, several of which have now occured. The consultant was also asked to extend the perimeter to include all of the U.S. 74 and that small sector to its east that would be within one mile of the Town. The reason for that action was that both sides of U.S. 74 should be treated the same, and certain land uses beginning to occur immediately behind the U.S. 74 frontage were giving cause for concern.

As part of this Study, an updated base map at 1" : 800' was prepared for this "Matthews Area". The map on the facing page is a reduction of that base map, showing Matthews' Town Limits as of March, 1979, and the general one mile area. The Town of Stallings in Union County is depicted. Stallings runs directly to the County line, extends both east and west of U.S. 74 and Monroe Road, and is a rapidly urbanizing area. Were Stallings to undertake zoning, since there is no limitation by Statute over such authority excepting for four of the seven Mecklenburg County municipalities, including Matthews,their extraterritorial area could extend for one mile into Mecklenburg County, as shown. Were such authority to be exercised, Stallings would control land use decisions to within less than one-half mile of the present Town Limits of Matthews, including over that area through which the Outer Loop will traverse. Mecklenburg County would have opportunity of naming members to Stalling's Zoning Board and Board of Adjustment were this to occur.

MONROE ROAD
SAM NEWELL ROAD
US 74 INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD
MATTHEWS-MINT HILL ROAD
NC 51
BARONS ROAD
PINEVILLE-MATTHEWS ROAD
TARA TOWN ROAD
OLD MONROE ROAD
MONROE ROAD
WEDDINGTON ROAD
NORTH
MATTHEWS
NORTH CAROLINA
AND VICINITY
STALLINGS
MECKLENBURG COUNTY
UNION COUNTY

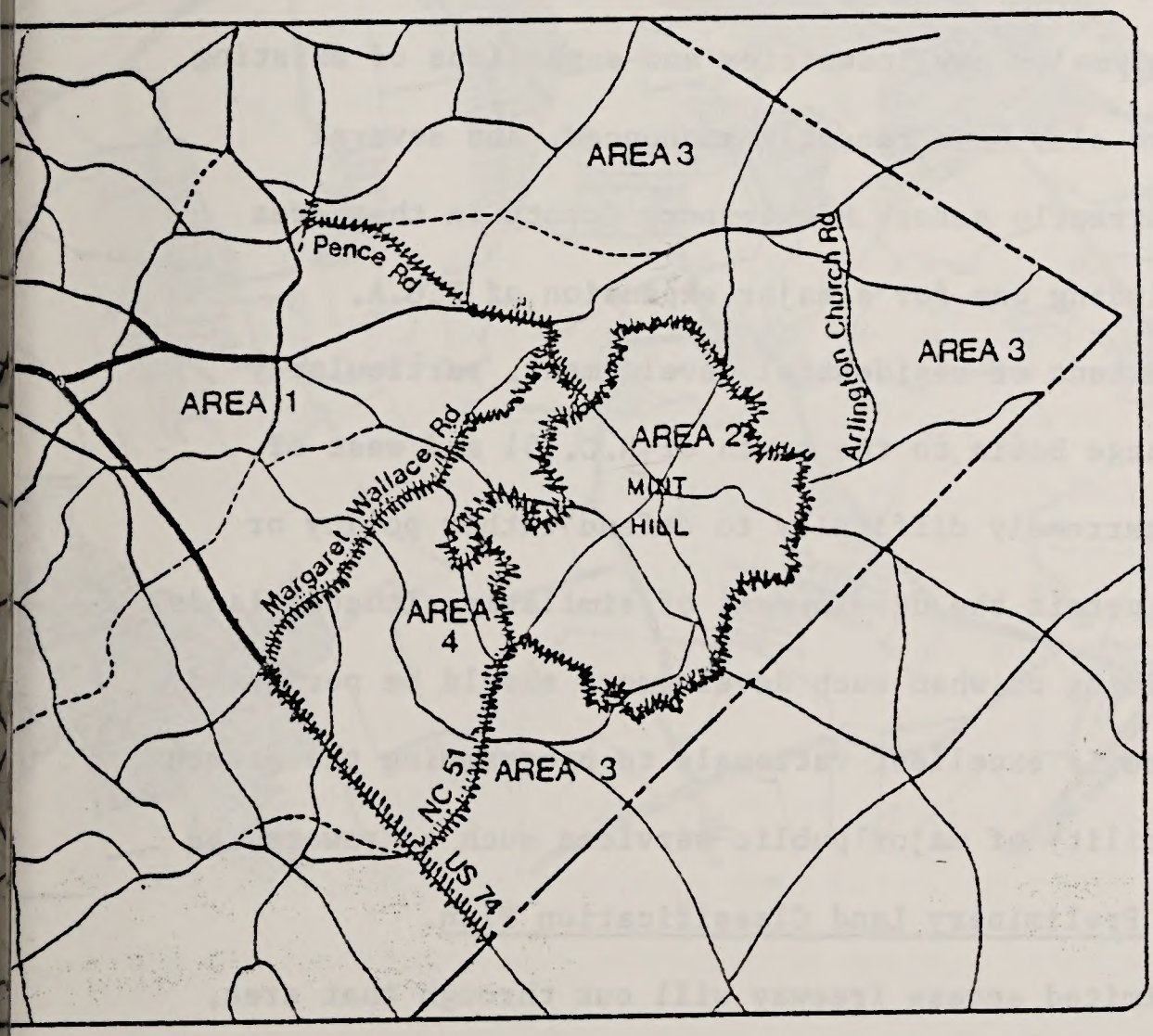
In a Study released on March 21, 1979, entitled Preliminary Plan of the Suburban East Area, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission treats this area to the east of U.S. 74.

There are statements in this Study which may be outdated. The Study indicates U.S. 74 will be changed or replaced either on present or new alignment with a freeway. The N.C. Department of Transportation together with the N.C. Transportation Board have long had a goal of spanning the state from the port at Wilmington to Boone in the mountains with a major, efficient arterial highway. They have proposed that U.S. 74 to Charlotte, U.S. 16 and possible new freeway connection from it in Lincoln County to U.S. 321, and then U.S. 321, together form this facility, to be upgraded or built to at least expressway character, with some limited portions of it, particularly in more congested areas or for new sections, to be of freeway character. The distinction is that the freeway portions would have 100% control of access, whereas the expressway portions would permit access, but to the least possible degree of friction from abutting uses and road crossings.

The N.C. Department of Transportation, accordingly, plans to upgrade or replace parts of U.S. 74 through the more intensely built-up areas of Charlotte with a freeway facility. They have studies indicating they may to do the same around Monroe with a new by-pass freeway, at some point in the future. For lower Mecklenburg County, the state is considering improvements to the facility as it exists, and at some time in the future may add additional lanes, turning lanes, and similar features. N.C. D.O.T. has informed the consultant the more that local government can do to assure least possible points of entry and conflict in that area will be the most helpful action, in order to maintain the safety, efficiency and carrying capacity of this highway.

The map on the facing page is from this March, 1979 preliminary Study.

For Area 3, this Study does not reflect existing urban development of mobile home courts, commercial uses, and subdivisions, in close relationship to U.S. 74. For Area 4, the alternatives listed in the Study essentially all assume at some point in the future it will be urban, and pose questions as to when, at what intensity of land use, and of what character. The Study advocates creation of more "employment centers" in this area, similar to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 proposal of major industrial areas in this vicinity and of "Metro Service Center", as a means to decrease the need for travel on U.S. 74 to Charlotte's Central Business District as a place for employment.



LEGEND

GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREAS

AREA 1 - Charlotte Expansion

AREA 2 - Mint Hill

AREA 3 - Beyond Mint Hill

AREA 4 - Irvins Creek Basin

GENERAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

AREA 1 - Urban

AREA 2 - Low Density

AREA 3 - Very Low Density

AREA 4 - Three Alternatives

DATE 2/12/79

CHARLOTTE - MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

Growth Management Areas

NORTH

NO. 14

COMMUNITY FOCUS SERIES

SUBURBAN EAST AREA

SOURCE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

The Study Area

The map on the facing page shows the present generalized pattern of urban land uses in the Matthews Area. It shows only significant clusters, not individual houses, trailers or minor activities along various roads. Certain patterns indicate points for consideration in preparation of this sketch development plan.

One, the general area above N.C. 51, east of the Town Limits of Matthews, running northerly and westerly to Monroe Road, has one of the heaviest industrial development areas of Mecklenburg County, with industries of intensive characteristics with some thousands of employees. The general trend supports the concept in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Comprehensive Plan - 1995 of encouragement of expansion of and protection of that area for industrial activity. Several major new industries and expansions of existing industries in this area have also been recently announced, and several rezoning application are currently before Mecklenburg County in that area for industrial zoning, including one for a major expansion of P.C.A.

The present amount of and extent of residential development, particularly in the Fourmile Creek drainage basin to the south of N.C. 51 and west of Monroe Road, will make it extremely difficulty to defend either policy or law that would seek to not permit the development of similarly situated lands in a similar manner. The timing of when such development should be permitted is another matter, and there is excellent rationale to programming the growth of that area to the availability of major public services such as sewers, as was suggested in the draft Preliminary Land Classification Plan.

The Outer Loop as a 100% limited access freeway will cut through that area, and could well be used as a design tool for the area that will be to the south of this freeway in order to discourage its conversion from essentially a rural farm character to urban character.

THE PATTERN OF URBAN LAND USES IN THE MATTHEWS AREA

That corridor officially determined by the N.C. Transportation Board for the Outer Loop Freeway for the area to the west of U.S. 74 is shown on the map on the facing page, superimposed over the urban land use pattern.

As has been discussed earlier in this Study, a Task Force appointed by the Chairman of the Technical Coordinating Committee for Transportation Planning in Mecklenburg County has been working for a year in examination of the best possible routing of this corridor to the east, between U.S. 74 and N.C. 24-27. It is anticipated the product of that Task Force will be presented and adopted in June, 1979. At this time, they have narrowed to three alternate routes being given further examination.

A "corridor" is not a proposed right-of-way. It is a much broader alignment within which at later time as detailed design is applied, a determination would be made as to just what portions of the corridor would be necessary for the freeway. However, the U.S. Department of Transportation's national standard in areas exhibiting the type of development as is seen in the Matthews Area would indicate a right-of-way between two hundred feet (200') to three hundred feet (300') would result, excepting for interchange areas. The corridor shown on this facing page is an eight hundred foot (800') width, for purposes of illustration.

In general, railroads as a passenger service are rapidly declining. The railroad through Matthews from Charlotte to Monroe and with connections Nationwide from those nodes offers a particular advantage for the general industrial expansion anticipated in this sector. The majority of such possible heavier railroad use would be to the north of Matthews, running to Charlotte, and should not create an undue burden through the heart of the Town. However, this may become a point for future consideration, as Union County and Monroe are waging an aggressive program for industrial expansion, with evident signs of success.

THE PATTERN OF URBAN LAND USES IN THE MATTHEWS AREA

WITH APPROVED OUTER LOOP CORRIDOR

New Matthews - Mint Hill Area N. C. 51?

The Land Use Plan for Matthews calls for a N.C. 51 By-Pass, to run to the north of the Town, then southerly to connect between P.C.A., a major industry, and U.S. 74. That Plan was prepared and adopted a year or more ago. As has been referenced earlier, several new major industries or industrial expansions have been recently announced, including one for a major expansion of P.C.A. Were the alignment for this By-Pass that had been chosen over a year ago to hold the P.C.A. site sould be split and possibly not be capable of the announced development. Consideration for adjustment of the alignment is made in this Study. One possibility would be to cut from existing N.C. 51 due west of the present P.C.A. development, cutting northerly to the immediate east of the Town Limits, then westerly as previously planned to tie in to old N.C. 51.

Another possible alternate may bear even more consideration, for the overall efficiency and use of N.C. 51. In the Preliminary Plan of the Suburban East Area, released by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission in March, 1979, they state: "If the southern Outer Belt intersects Independence Boulevard south of N.C. 51 and Matthews (as officially set by the State), a new thoroughfare generally running from N.C. 51 at the northwest Town Limits of Matthews across U.S. 74 to N.C. 51 near Lebanon Road merits consideration. Employment between Monroe Road and Independence Boulevard in this area is now growing rapidly and may grow more rapidly in the future. This employment and possible metro-center development in this area may warrant this new thoroughfare."

The map on the facing page indicates a possible alignment through primarily open lands by which such new segment of N.C. 51 could be accomodated. Such alignment would remove N.C. 51 from being possibly too close to the new Outer Loop to the south of Matthews. It would also serve this major emerging industrial area in better way, being more in the center of that area.

POSSIBLE NEW MATTHEWS - MINT HILL N. C. 51

Unique, Sensitive, or Historic Lands or Sites

The Matthews' Land Use Plan, 1978, found no areas subject to flooding within the then Town Limits. Also, no historic sites or structures were listed. There was a casual finding of possible future value to certain soils for their clay. Since then, annexations have occured the result of which is the possibility a limited amount of flood prone land may now be within the Town Limits.

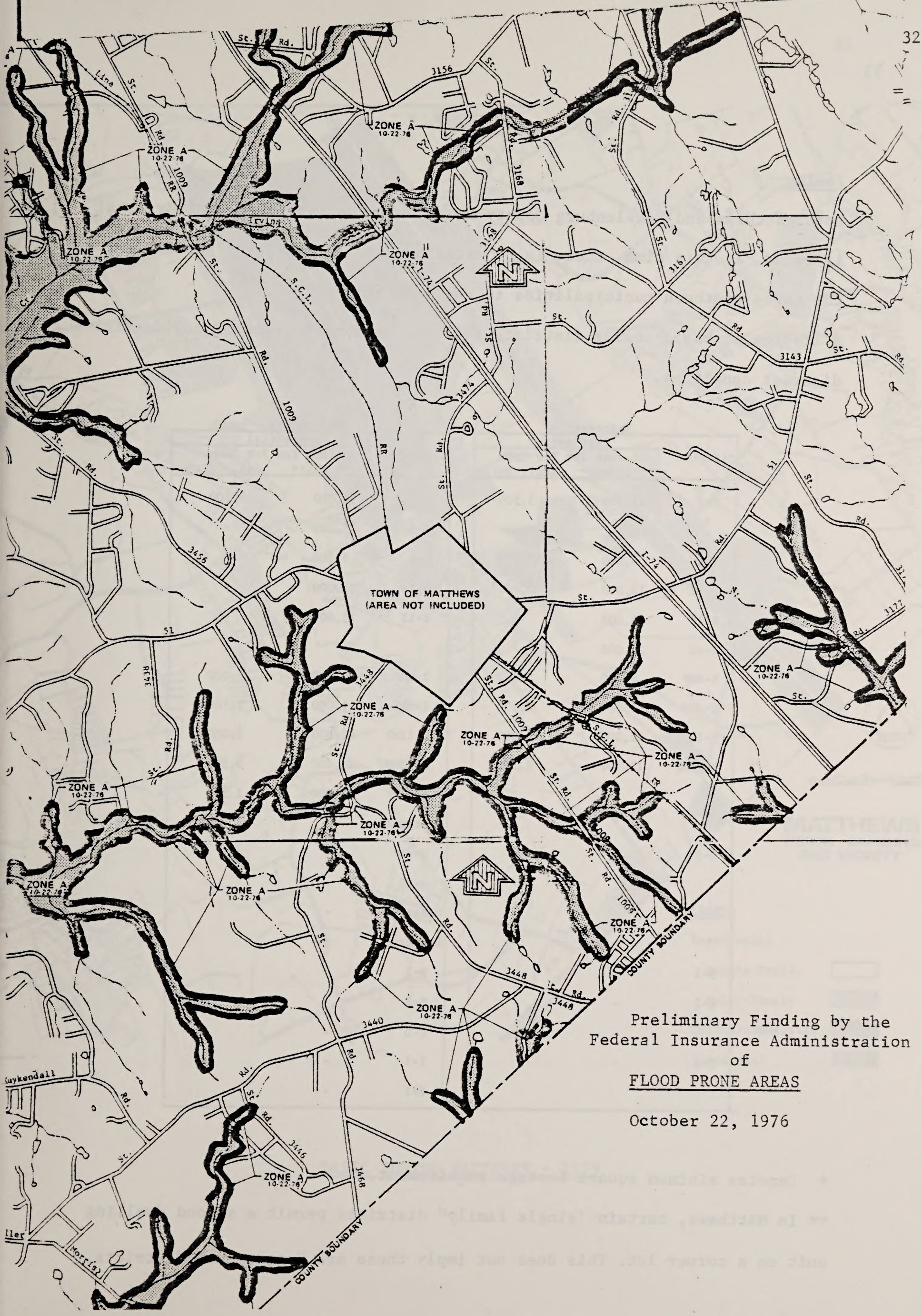
The map on the facing page shows the October 22, 1976, results of the original studies of the U.S. Federal Insurance Administration as to those lands in the Matthews Area that are subject to flooding. F.I.A. is preparing a more detailed study, that will provide specifics, much as they recently completed within the City of Charlotte. A Note on this 1976 product stated: "These maps may not include all Special Flood Hazard Areas in the community. After the more detailed study, the Special Flood Hazard Areas shown on these maps may be modified, and other areas added."

That Study found significant areas to the south of Matthews to be flood prone, and limited areas to the north and east.

The companion Study refining the Matthews' Zoning Ordinance will call for controls over development of lands in flood prone areas to assure least possible interference with the natural water courses and floodways, and to assure that development will be of such nature that the least possible loss of life and property would result when lands are in such flood prone areas.

No historic sites or structures have been noted by the Mecklenburg Historic Commission in the Matthews Area. The Town became a member of that Commission in 1978, and at some time a study of structures within the Town itself are to be performed.

The Mecklenburg Soil and Water Conservation District has found that some of the better agricultural lands in the County are to the south of Matthews, in the Fourmile Creek Basin. This Study recognizes those lands, although the urban movement may not lend means for long range protection for agriculture.



Preliminary Finding by the
Federal Insurance Administration
of
FLOOD PRONE AREAS

October 22, 1976

Zoning

Both Matthews and Mecklenburg County have zoning and the entire Study Area is zoned. At this time, there is no extraterritorial authority permitted for the three southern municipalities in Mecklenburg County.

A listing of basic zoning districts follows, with comparison of residential district densities.

Matthews		
	Residential	
District	Land Area for First Unit*	For Each Addl. Unit*
R-U	15,000	3,500**
R-9	9,000	3,000
R-12	12,000	5,000
R-15	15,000	-
R-20	20,000	-
R-6MF	6,000	2,000
R-9MF	9,000	2,500
R-12MF	12,000	3,000
R-15MF	15,000	3,500
O-9	-	
B-1	-	
B-2	-	
I-1	-	

Mecklenburg		
	Residential	
District	Land Area for First Unit*	For Each Addl. Unit*
R-U	15,000	3,500
R-6	6,000	-
R-9	9,000	-
R-12	12,000	-
R-15	15,000	-
R-6MF	6,000	1,000
R-9MF	9,000	2,500
R-12MF	12,000	3,000
R-15MF	15,000	3,500
R-R	9,000	2,500
Institut.	-	
O-9	-	
O-15	-	
Research 1	-	
Research 2	-	
B-1	-	
B-2	-	
B-D	-	
I-1	-	
I-2	-	

* Denotes minimum square footage requirement.

** In Matthews, certain "single family" districts permit a second dwelling unit on a corner lot. This does not imply these are "apartment" districts.

BASIC ZONING PATTERNS - 1979

A separate Study Element currently under way by the comprehensive planning grant the Town of Matthews was awarded is for refinement of the zoning ordinance.

These Study Elements coincide in this peripheral area study, and part of the work of amendment of Matthews' zoning ordinance is directly geared to needs outside of the municipal boundary.

Three changes of note are reflected. One, the creation of a "C-P", Commercial Parkway zoning district. This C-P zone is designed for application to those lands fronting on U.S. 74. It is hoped that Mecklenburg County will also pick up this new zone and apply it to other areas of major arterial thoroughfares. C-P has large lot requirements, large setback requirements, and controls the number of and spacing of points of ingress and ingress to the highway. It is designed both in recognition of impact and best use of lands along such a highway, while at the same time bringing to a minimum the friction such use could cause to the highway's safety and efficiency for its basic purpose, which is cross-state travel.

The second major change is the addition to Matthews' zoning ordinance of the County's I-2, Industrial Zoning District. Certain of the lands abutting the Town and already developed industrially are in that zone, and it is intended to permit their continuance and encourage similar uses where appropriate.

The third major change is reworking of the R-U, Rural District. This District's text states it was designed to protect agricultural endeavors and to preserve lands. There were no density standards. The R-U will have a minimum lot area of one acre, and is intended for application primarily to the south of the Town. It is suggested the County consider amendment of its minimum lot area for R-U,to protect those lands that will be south of the Outer Loop in the Matthews Area.

THE PLAN

The Plan of major land uses is shown on the following page. The Plan follows the discussion in this Study.

All commercial needs would be met by that area within the Town of Matthews indicated for commercial use, together with a large area along U.S. 74 (Independence Boulevard). There would be no need, as has been suggested by the studies of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission, to at some time and place zone lands further west in this vicinity for a shopping center as the area develops. Instead, that need can and should easily be met by lands associated with U.S. 74.

The emerging and largely already zoned industrial area to the west of those lands fronting U.S. 74 is recognized and advocated. This major industrial area is suggested to extend further to the south of existing N.C. 51 than had been considered to date, to the corridor for the Outer Loop.

A new N.C. 51 is proposed, as had been suggested by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commissions's March, 1979 Preliminary Plan of the Suburban East Area. It is suggested there will be little need for direct access from abutting lands on this new roadway. N.C. 51, now that an Outer Loop has been set, will have the characteristics of a major street in an urban area. Least possible points of access should be permitted. It will be to the benefit of local governments in Mecklenburg County to work closely with the N.C. Department of Transportation, even to the point of financial involvement, to see that this new stretch of N.C. 51 becomes reality.

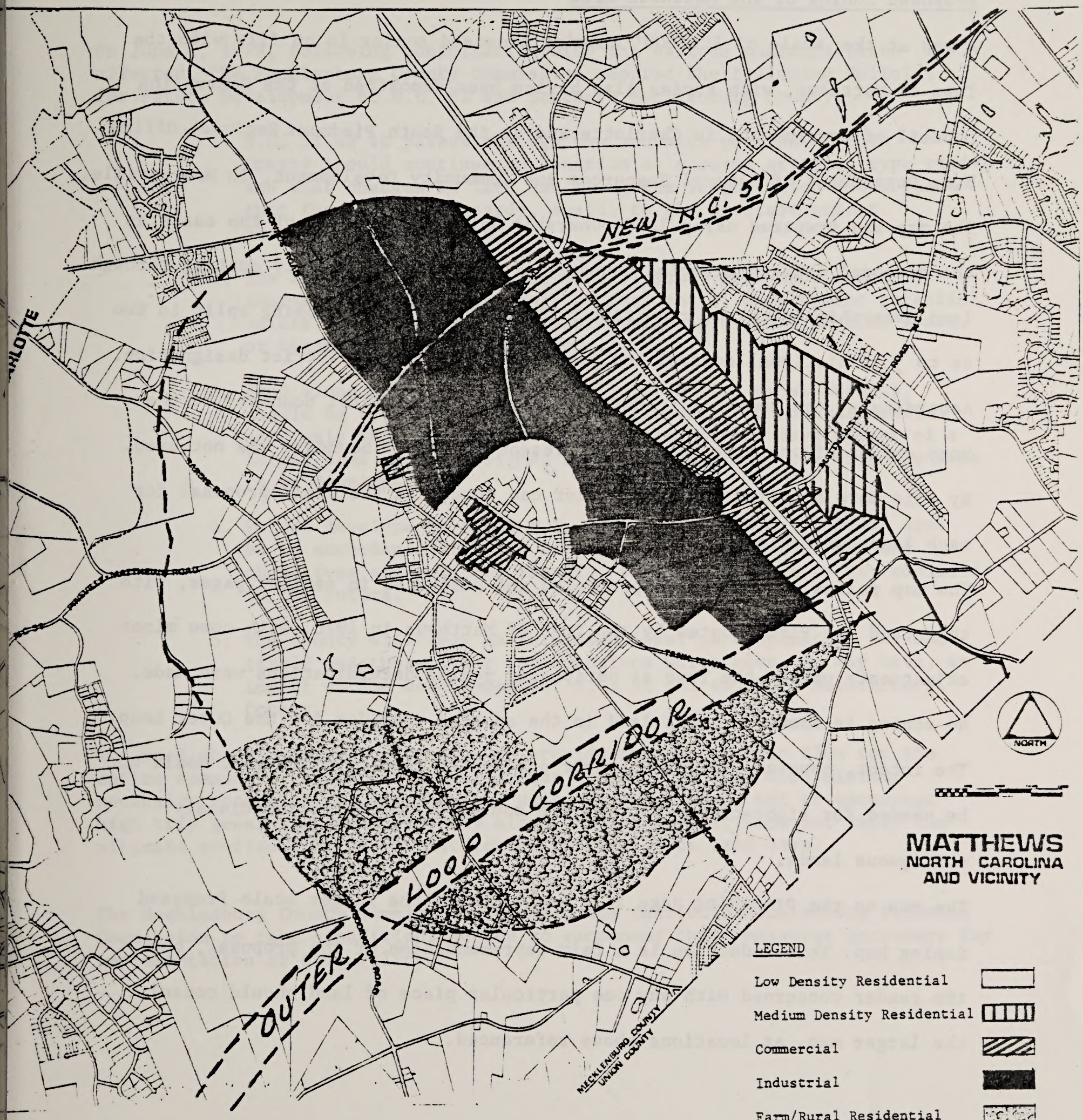
Those lands on the southern side of Fourmile Creek within the peripheral area, beyond existing urban development, and split by the Outer Loop corridor, are suggested for preservation of non-urban uses, such as agriculture and large lot residential use, at least at this time. This concept compliments the similar proposal in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission's Preliminary Land Classification Plan of May, 1978.

Within the present Town Limits of Matthews, land uses are proposed as shown in the Land Use Plan adopted in April, 1978, with minor changes at "edge" areas to reflect the influences of abutting lands.

The remainder of the land areas within this peripheral territory are suggested for low density residential use, excepting those lands to the east of that frontage land along the east side of U.S. 74. For that area, a multi-family, medium density residential use is suggested, in recognition of the several mobile home courts already existent therein, and of the character of these lands, between commercial on one side and low-density residential on the other.

No Plan should be frozen in time. At least at five year intervals, any Plan or Policy should be reexamined. That premise needs particular respect in this area of Mecklenburg County, which this Study has pointed out is one of the fastest growing and changing land areas as a major metropolitan area situate between Atlanta and Richmond.

This Plan is developed to seek to secure protection to the unique existing character of the Town of Matthews, and to permit that Town and nearby lands to develop in a reasonable, responsible manner. It thus is a guide, not an absolute.


NEW N.C. 51
MONROE ROAD
HARRIS ROAD
INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD
OUTER LOOP CORRIDOR
MECKLENBURG COUNTY
UNION COUNTY
NORTH
MATTHEWS
NORTH CAROLINA
AND VICINITY
LEGEND
Low Density Residential
Medium Density Residential
Commercial
Industrial
Farm/Rural Residential

THE PLAN

Proposed Zoning of the Matthews Area

A map at the scale of 1": 800' showing proposed zoning is on file with the Town of Matthews, with copies also having been deposited at the Centralina Council of Governments in Charlotte and at the South Piedmont Regional Office, N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, in Mooresville. The map was prepared using land ownership lines in some 95% of the cases as the proposed extraterritorial boundary, rather than needlessly cutting through land ownerships with the resultant problems of such lands being split in two as to jurisdictional control and possibly as to zoning district designation. Accordingly, the somewhat traditional circular peripheral boundary to the very extent of one mile beyond the present municipal boundary was not used. By this more detailed map, the reader can determine the exact proposal for each land ownership parcel.

The map relies upon the Plan presented and discussed in earlier pages, with that Land Use Plan adopted by the Town of Matthews in 1978, with some minor adjustments within the Town as peripheral zoning determinations were made. No zoning is shown for that land in the adopted corridor for the Outer Loop. The intent, however, is for whatever portion of that corridor that would not be needed for right-of-way to have the zoning proposed for immediately contiguous lands.

The map on the preceding page is a reduction of the larger scale Proposed Zoning Map. This reduction is a fair representation of the proposal, but the reader concerned with any one particular piece of land should consult the larger map, at locations above referenced.

APPENDIX

On June 4, 1979, following consultation with the various municipalities affected, the Mecklenburg County Commission adopted the following Policies for Future Development of N.C. 51 and Southern Mecklenburg County:

1. N.C. 51 as it passes through the southern portion of this County should continue to function as a rural arterial type road*, and that changes in land use along its length which would place that function in jeopardy, shall, to the greatest extent possible, be disallowed;

2. The rezoning of land in the N.C. 51 Study Area should not increase the existing supply of residential development potential unless mitigated by exceptional design, provision of open space, or other special considerations.

3. Land along N.C. 51 or along its intersecting cross streets, should be favorably considered for rezoning to non-residential uses only when part of an overall plan for the development of a larger area and is designed to blend satisfactorily with the area to be developed.

4. Future development along N.C. 51 and in the N.C. 51 Study Area be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan - 1995 and the objectives and policies therein, as now stated or as may modified in the future.

5. The County will seek an increased level of cooperation between itself and those other jurisdictions which have, or may have, an impact on the development of N.C. 51 and southern Mecklenburg County.

* A road whose primary function is to provide through traffic flow for the entire community, characterized as either two or four lane with minimum necessary access points and frontage uses, designed so as not to encourage high trip generating uses directly along the roadway. It does not imply the ultimate continuation of or restriction to rural type land uses.

The Mecklenburg County Commission directed the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission to take expeditious action to recommend those measures necessary for implementation of this Policy.